GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2294
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2016
Eco-Sensitive Zones
Dhotre Shri Sanjay Shamrao;Fatepara Shri Devajibhai Govindbhai;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Shewale Shri Rahul Ramesh

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government/National Board for Wildlife has advised the States to identify the areas for declaration/conservation as Eco-Sensitive Zones including areas outside National Parks/Sanctuaries and if, so, the details thereof along with the details of areas identified so far, State-wise;
(b) the criteria/method followed by States to identify such areas;
(c) whether various proposals for declaring Eco-Sensitive Zones around Sanctuaries and National Parks are pending with the Government and if so, the details thereof, State-wise including Gujarat;
(d) the time by which the said proposals are likely to be approved by the Government; and
(e) the details of prohibited activities in the Eco-Sensitive Zones along with instances of violations noticed in this regard and the action taken thereon during the last three years and the current year, State-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a), (b) (c) and (d) The National Board for Wildlife in its meeting held on 17th March 2005, had taken the following decision with respect to declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zone around National Parks and Sanctuaries:

"The proposal for augmenting the conservation of the existing Protected Areas was agreed to. However, the delineation of Eco-Sensitive Zones would have to be site specific and relate to regulation, rather than prohibition of specific activities. State Governments will have to be consulted in this regard and concurrence obtained. This being an area of potential conflict with local communities, no enhancement of area should be done arbitrarily.".

The criteria for identification of Eco-Sensitive Zones, as agreed by National Board for Wildlife are as follows:

i. Complete protection to endemic species in its entire range;
ii. Development processes not to reduce, damage or destroy the habitat of critically endangered or any other threatened species;
iii. Protection to biological corridors;
iv. Protection to highly complex and diversified ecosystem susceptible to irreversible damage , like coral reefs, mangroves, etc.
v. Sites associated with reproductive, breeding or nurturing behaviour of rare and threatened species;
vi. Existence of pristine forests;
vii. Steep slopes (more than 60Âº)

The State-wise details of proposals received in this regard is at Annexure-1. Based on the proposals received from the State Government, so far, the Ministry has approved/notified 416 proposals. Out of 17 proposals received from the State of Gujarat, draft/final notifications have been issued for 15 proposals.

Declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zones around National Parks and Sanctuaries involves consultation with States besides seeking comments from the public, after issuing a preliminary notification giving 60 days for this purpose. The objections/comments/suggestions received along with the draft notifications are considered by an Expert Committee on Eco-sensitive Zones in the MoEF&CC, wherein representatives of the concerned States also participate. Based on the recommendations of the ESZ Expert Committee, the Ministry notifies Eco-Sensitive Zones around Protected Areas in the country, within a time limit of 545 days specified under the Environment (Protection) Rule,1986.

(e) The Notifications for Eco-Sensitive Zones provide for prohibition of unsustainable activities like mining, establishment of polluting industries, etc and promotion of sustainable activities. Besides, the notification also provides for appraisal of certain activities by the Monitoring Committee at the State level. The details of violations in this regard are not collated at the level of Central Government.
****